IN THE CLAIMS:

1-12. (canceled)

13. (currently amended) A postal object selecting method in a mail packaging system, comprising the steps of:

identifying a plurality of customers;

identifying a plurality of postal objects;

determining an access charge for each object [[by]] for an associated customer to a marketer, said determining comprising the steps of:

determining an expected gross profit to the marketer from the customer,

determining a probability of success of the object with respect to the customer, and

determining provisioning costs for the object;

determining an expected return on investment for the marketer from one or more of the plurality of customers for one or more of said plurality of objects based on the determined access charge; and

selecting one or more objects to be assembled into a mail package for one of said plurality of customers, such that [[an]] the expected return on investment from the customer for said mail package is substantially the same for each of the one or more of the plurality of customers.

14. (previously presented) The method of claim 13, further comprising the step of:

determining an expected value of the mail package, wherein

the selecting step selects the one or more objects from the plurality of objects to be assembled into the mail packages, such that the expected value for the mail package is maximized.

15. (previously presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the expected value for the mail package is a function of the access charge for each selected object and the provisioning costs, and object selection is subject to one or more predetermined constraints.

16. (previously presented) The method of claim 15, wherein each object has an object type selected from the group consisting of outgoing envelopes, primary documents, return envelopes, and inserts.

17. (previously presented) The method of claim 16, wherein the one or more predetermined constraints include at least one of a weight constraint and a number of objects constraint for each mail package.

18. (previously presented) The method of claim 17, wherein the number of objects constraint specifies at least one of a minimum number of objects constraint and a maximum number of objects constraint for each of one or more of the object types.

19. (previously presented) The method of claim 15, wherein object selection is also determined as a function of managerial prerogatives.

20. (previously presented) The method of claim 19, wherein the managerial prerogatives may specify a status by customer for each selectable object, which specified status includes one of "do not use", "absolute priority", "high priority" and "normal priority".

21. (previously presented) The method of claim 17, wherein the weight constraint is specified as a total weight of all objects included in the mail package.

22. (currently amended) The method of claim 18, wherein one ~~ones~~ of the one or more objects selected for each mail package are assembled into one or more object packets, and the mail package is assembled from at least one of the one or more object packets one or more of the plurality of objects.

23. (previously presented) The method of claim 22, wherein the one or more object packets and/or single objects are assembled by offline processing.

24. (previously presented) The method of claim 23, wherein the plurality of mail packages are assembled by online processing.

25. (previously presented) The method of claim 24, wherein the one or more object packets produced by offline processing are stored in a packet storage device and retrieved for online processing.

26. (previously presented) The method of claim 24, wherein the storage and retrieval steps are performed by one or more packet retrieval transfer devices.

27. (previously presented) The method of claim 15, wherein the selection step is performed using goal integer programming.

28. (currently amended) The method of claim 15, wherein provisioning costs include printing and ink costs.

29. (previously presented) The method of claim 18, wherein the one or more object types include inserts.

30. (previously presented) The method of claim 19, wherein the selection step is performed using goal integer programming.

31. (currently amended) An object selecting method in a packaging system, comprising the steps of:

identifying a plurality of customers;

identifying a plurality of objects;

determining an access fee for each object [[by]] for an associated customer to a marketer, wherein each access fee is variably determined;

determining an expected return on investment to the marketer from one or more of the plurality of customers for one or more of said plurality of objects based on the determined access ~~charge~~ fee; and

selecting one or more objects to be assembled into a package for one of said plurality of customers, such that the expected return on investment from the customer for said package is substantially the same for each of the one or more of the plurality of customers.

32. (canceled)

33. (previously presented) The method of claim 31, wherein

the selecting step selects one or more objects from the plurality of objects to be assembled into a package to be provided to each of the customers, such that the expected return on investment for each customer is maximized.

34. (currently amended) The method of claim [[32]] 31, wherein the expected return on investment for each customer is a function of the access fee for each selected object and provisioning costs, and object selection is further subject to one or more predetermined constraints.

35. (previously presented) The method of claim 34, wherein the plurality of objects includes sales offers for unsold airline seats.

36. (previously presented) The method of claim 34, wherein the plurality of objects includes sales offers for unsold shipping capacity.

37. (previously presented) The method of claim 34, wherein the plurality of objects includes sales offers to be provided in postal mail packages directed to each of the plurality of customers.